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Promoting understanding of language in use.

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THE BRITISH ASSOCIATION FOR APPLIED LINGUISTICS

Membership

Individual Membership is open to anyone qualified or active in applied linguistics. Applied linguists who are not normally resident in Great Britain or Northern Ireland are welcome to join, although they will normally be expected to join their local AILA affiliate in addition to BAAL. Associate Membership is available to publishing houses and to other appropriate bodies at the discretion of the Executive Committee. Institution membership entitles up to three people to be full members of BAAL.

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Editorial

Dear Members,

The last twelve months have seen the transition of our newsletter from a print-only to an electronic-only publication. As announced previously, this newsletter is the first that is published in electronic format only. There have been some minor changes: the contents table has been moved the front, and the membership application form, which can be completed electronically, can now be found online on the BAAL website at <http://www.baal.org.uk>

The current issue includes information about the forthcoming annual conference in Bristol - and a reminder that the AGM will take place on the Friday of the conference - as well as reports from some of our SIGs and the BAAL/CUP seminars.

With best wishes,

Sebastian Rasinger
Newsletter Editor

BAAL 2011 will be held at the University of the West of England Bristol (UWE) from 1st to 3rd September. The conference theme is 'The Impact of Applied Linguistics'. Plenary speakers include:

Diane Larsen-Freeman (University of Michigan): The Impact of Applied Linguistics: Using a Complexity Theory Lens to Understand the Use of Repetition in Language Teaching

Rick Iedema (University of Technology, Sydney): Degeneracy rules: How social complexity affects research practice

Guy Cook (Open University): Applied Linguistics: impact of, and impact on

The conference has been organised by Jeanine Treffers-Daller, Jo Angouri and other staff from the Department of English, Linguistics and Communication with the support of the Bristol Centre for Linguistics (BCL). The conference dinner will be held at the Marriot Hotel in Bristol, which will include a barn dance event with the Pluck and Squeeze Ceilidh Band.

Over 300 delegates have registered to attend the conference and will deliver a wide range of different papers and posters loosely based around the conference theme. Special Interest Groups (SIGs) running as part of the conference include Corpus Linguistics, Intercultural Communication, Language Learning and Teaching, Testing,

Evaluation and Assessment, UK Linguistic Ethnography Forum and Vocabulary Studies. A panel on ELT and colloquia focused on Clinical Linguistics (an invited colloquium), Complex Systems, Health Communication, Reading and Research Methods will also feature in the programme for the conference.

BAAL gives two international scholarships (one of which is the Chris Brumfit award) and ten UK student scholarships. The scholars Zheng Qun and Ayesha Kamal, have received the international scholarships for this year's conference.

A post conference event entitled 'Intercultural Communication; from theory to practice and back' will also be held.

For further information about BAAL 2011 and the post conference event please see: <http://www1.uwe.ac.uk/cahe/elc/newsandevents/events/baalconference.aspx>

Future conferences:

BAAL 2012 will run from 6th – 8th September and be hosted by the team at the Centre for Applied Language Research, University of Southampton. A call for papers for this conference will be released in the next few weeks so please keep checking the BAAL website for more details!

Dawn Knight
Meeting Secretary

Report for Year 2010-2011

There have been several events affecting the BAAL website over the past year.

1. There was a Trojan attack, which took the website down for a few days in September 2010. This was caused by some rogue software which had found its way on to our website – the source is still unknown but was likely to have been weak passwords. The passwords were changed, the trojan removed, and the whole website reloaded. A temporary site was provided during the cleaning process.
2. The new design of website was loaded in late 2010. The only problem has been that the Good Practice guidelines were originally placed in the members-only area, they have now been placed in the public area.
3. There was a loss of service for a few days in early 2011. This was caused by an ongoing growth problem in e-communication, which has caused demand to outstrip supply in many areas. Hopefully this will not be a common occurrence, but continuity of service cannot be taken as a given over the next year.
4. Passwords were set up for all members. The process took about

20 hours to complete, and has added an extra one or two hours onto the weekly site maintenance.

5. The online member's list should be published on the website shortly.
6. The proceedings for the Aberdeen conference should be published on the website shortly.

I have actioned just over 800 emails for the website since the last AGM.

Martin Edwardes
Web Editor

A meeting of the Language in Africa SiG was held at Coventry University on April 2, 2011. There were 11 papers and a plenary talk by John Clegg.

An overarching theme: within language ecologies, beliefs and practices of language users and environmental affordances and constraints need to be closely studied, then used to inform language management in education and other domains. Planning needs to be flexible enough to provide a basis of support for indigenous languages as well as languages of wider communication, such as English.

Ian Cheffy of SIL reported on an experimental research project in north-west Cameroon, which introduced the Kom language as the language of initial literacy and language of instruction (LoI) over three years of schooling (2008 – 2010). The area is very rural, inhabited mainly by the Kom people; however, a minority group of Fulani speak Fulfulde, a language with a very different structure. The experiment compared the success of children in 12 schools where English is the LoI with 12 schools where Kom has been introduced as the language of initial literacy. Children in the Kom LoI schools achieved higher scores in Language Arts, Mathematics, and, more surprisingly, in Oral English. Moreover, the Fulani children did almost as well in Kom-medium as the native-speakers.

It was encouraging to hear of a pilot project that is showing such a high

degree of success. Questions were raised of how such results can reach both parents and policy makers. We also need to know more about what contextual factors may have contributed to success. Comparative studies such as Pinnock (2011) are very valuable.

Chongo Musonda Mwila focused on issues related to piloting New Breakthrough to Literacy, a project using seven indigenous Zambian languages for initial literacy. Her 2004 study identified significant gains in terms of learner participation and critical thinking. One weakness is that the ‘community language’ used for initial literacy often is not the mother tongue of all children in a school. Issues of equity are also salient in relation to access to English. Although several varieties of Zambian English are in widespread use, the continuing prestige of British English, and the knowledge and culture it conveys, results in social stratification through competences in English. Mere possession of English qualifications is no longer a guarantee of individual advancement. Chongo argued that language in education policies should be responsive to what is significant and relevant in local contexts. Further development of indigenous languages in education could raise their status, providing social and economic mobility within accessible domains.

The issue of an urban – rural divide was picked up by Gladys Ansa and

Patience hMensa. This paper challenged ideas concerning theories of motivation for successful language learning in Ghana. In particular, the affective and instrumental contrast does not adequately account for different levels of achievement in English, especially between urban and rural areas. The sociolinguistic context plays a more significant role than individual motivation; in rural areas, there is lack of need to use English and lack of availability of English, whereas linguistically heterogenous urban centres use English as a lingua franca. This presents a dilemma. Is the policy in rural areas of using local languages from P1-P3, and even up to P6, beneficial as it increases local language literacy, or could this policy be having a further negative effect on the availability of English?

Annette Islei's presentation focused on Uganda. In 2007, local languages were introduced as LoIs from Primary 1-3, along with a new theme-based curriculum. Her 2010 study (with Margaret Baleta) showed that teachers are positive about the LoIs and the curriculum, but there are concerns about pupils' lack of exposure to English in rural areas (while urban and private schools request to use English as LoI). Teachers' own competences in the local language are limiting the effectiveness of its use as LoI. Methodologies used in teaching literacy, and the transfer to English, are additional challenges. These results picked up the theme of regional and urban diversity, pointing

to a need for teacher training that is relevant to context.

Also focusing on teacher-development, Ross Graham outlined the diverse linguistic situation in Ethiopia and questioned the federal government's top-down approach to educational planning. While there have been notable achievements in terms of enrolment in primary and secondary education, efforts to enhance the quality of English teaching – English being the MoI in high schools – are limited by policies in teacher training and development. Teachers need to be included in processes at school and local levels, but systems are weakest at these levels.

Gaps in the development of specific academic English language competences were addressed by Sudanese researchers Abdullahi El Malik and Yasir El Hag.

Abdullahi presented his research into the teaching of English in tertiary education. Tertiary education in Sudan was arabicized in 1990, but English has continued to be taught in a 2-hour module, 'English as a University Requirement'. Abdullahi's research revealed lack of consistency in lecturers' understanding of the aims and objectives of the module, huge class sizes, and problems with producing materials. He highlighted the importance of revising the ELT curriculum and methodology, proposing that needs analysis is essential.

Yasir's paper focused on English for medicine. He found that teaching is not entirely through Arabic, and the textbooks are nearly all in English. From the third year on, fieldwork and subsequent bridging to employment create new needs in terms of productive skills. His paper discussed how an efficient ESP training should promote the historical and cultural link between medical training and research circles in the UK and the Sudan.

The demands of academic writing in postgraduate study in the UK were addressed by Stella-Maris Orim, who reported on a pilot study of attitudes to plagiarism among Nigerian students in a Masters in Engineering programme at Coventry University. The study forms part of the extensive IPPHEAE study (Impact of Plagiarism Policies in Higher Education across Europe). One clear finding is that Nigerian institutions of higher education do not at present provide students with a proper awareness of plagiarism and acceptable strategies for citation.

The plenary speaker, John Clegg, brought insights from a project in the DfID-funded 'EdQual' collaborative research programme. The project focuses on classroom language in Tanzania and Ghana at the point of transition from an African language to English as LoI (Clegg and Afitska, 2011). John presented an investigation into the language of Biology textbooks at the transition point. In Tanzania, this is from

P6 into Senior 1; in Ghana, from Primary 3 into Primary 4.

Based on readability measures, the Ghanaian text (Year 4) had language suitable for Year 6 for native speakers, while the Tanzanian text (for Year 7) came out as Year 10.

Disparities like these highlight the need for targeted research and effective educational action. More research is needed into children's ability to read textbooks, whether in English or local languages, bearing in mind that cognitive academic ability differs from general reading ability. In educational terms, problems stem from a lack of focus on children's actual English competences. Texts and examination questions are written as if for fluent readers, and teachers and inspectors are trained as though students' English will be adequate for learning.

A lack of 'joined-up thinking' is in evidence. The 'blindness' in publishing comes from a disconnection between the producers and consumers of texts. Teachers' lack of access to information, acute in Africa, leads to re-use of familiar texts, and a 'supply' rather than 'demand' led focus. As well as advocating attention to the textbook mismatch, John argued for a focus on developing a special pedagogy to train teachers to teach through English to weak ESL learners.

In a related paper, Alice Kiai focused on educational change and educational publishing in Kenya. The 2002 curricu-

lum review presented the opportunity for competition between educational publishers, both local and multinational. Textbooks are vetted by the Kenya Institute of Education. Alice's research examines the key processes that constitute the 'life' of the most popular secondary English textbook, looking at inter-related processes in the 'cycle of culture' involving producers, representation and identity, and consumers.

Chefena Hailemariam and Goodith White challenged conventional justifications of the choice of English offered by language planners, namely, the need for national unity and for national socio-economic development. In Eritrea, English is the medium of post-primary education, but is not essential for most public jobs or for business. Their survey of adult learners in Asmara revealed how adults are taking a positive individual stance to learning English as a means to participating in global culture and the diaspora. One may ask: how far have attitudes and motivations for using English moved forward in today's world of trans-global migration and transcultural flows?

Participants felt this had been a very productive meeting, with a high level of research and presentation leading to interesting discussions on a range of key matters. It was particularly gratifying that so many doctoral and Masters students from Africa (studying in the

UK) were able to attend and present their work.

References

Clegg, John and Afitska, Oksana (2011) Teaching and learning in two languages in African classrooms, *Comparative Education*, 47: 1, 61 — 77.

Pinnock, H. 2011. *Language and Education: The Missing Link*. Reading: CfBT Education Trust and Save the Children.

Reflection in the round: Discourses and Practices of Reflection in HE

This seminar took place at Oxford Brookes University on the 24th June.

The principal aims of the seminar were:

- to develop a dialogue between practice based and theoretical based researchers of reflective practice in the context of UK HE: specifically between those engaged in ethnographic and action research based research of reflection in professional and pedagogic practice with researchers who are engaged in discourse based approaches (Descriptive and Critical) of such practices.
- to develop an awareness and understanding of the nature of the discourse/s of assessed reflective writing and the practice of such assessment in UK HE pedagogy and in broader national standards and policy.
- to explore and discuss the genealogy of reflective practice and its role in UK HE. Why this practice, why now, why here, and who is it for?

In order to facilitate the aim of dialogue between disciplines and research perspectives this seminar followed on from a seminar with National Teaching Fellows on June 23rd who addressed the same key questions from practice perspectives across a range of disci-

plines. Four participants from the first day gave papers the BAAL/CUP seminar and summaries of the discussions from the first day. These provided insights on the range of different perspectives and disciplinary positions on reflective practice in HE. These were integrated with 5 papers that took a discursive perspective on reflective practice including CA, corpus linguistics and Foucaultian perspectives. .

Participants on both days were invited to address the following three initial questions:

- What are the range of discourses and practices that come under the term Reflection? What insights into such practices do discourse perspectives provide?
- What are the challenges of interpreting, framing the learning, and assessing, of reflection?
- Genealogy: Why this practice, why now, why here, and who is it for? (interpretations and explanations for the rise of reflection as a pedagogic and professional practice)

James Derounian (University of Gloucester) provided us with insight into the practice of reflection in community development. He argued that reflection is collective rather than individual, and should lead to the empowerment of the individual for the 'greater good' of the group. He used phrases to define reflection that included: *application, getting things done, action and practice*. This was set

within the framework of Arnstein's ladder, where there is a move from confession which is self-referential, through 'tokenism' which is mere lip service to change, to the highest rung which incorporates action for the good of the community. Essential to this is the Freirian concept of the link between theory and practice- '*critical reflection on practice is a requirement of the relationship between theory and practice. Otherwise theory becomes simply blah blah blah.*'

Steve Mann (University of Warwick) and Steve Walsh (University of Newcastle) opened the discourse based papers with an exploration of the characteristics of spoken reflective discourse in the context of teacher education. Using a CA approach, the paper enabled us to see the detail of the situated and dialogic nature of reflection in teacher trainee group work and identified the characteristics of the discourse tools that participants need to engage successfully in such practice. The use of dialogue allows for the negotiated understandings (interpsychological) to be available for further reflection and to learn from their experiences and internalise their understandings (intra). The paper showed how different discourses, roles, tasks and tools can be used to encourage reflection.

Fiona Farr's (University of Limerick) online paper examined the characteristics and nature of reflective practice in a corpus of spoken and written data

from an MA programme in language teacher education. The paper links a corpus based study of the register characteristics of the discourse of reflective practice with a qualitative text analysis of the nature and quality of student engagement with their reflective practice. The quantitative corpus analysis allows us to see *that* students are engaging in the activity and the qualitative text analysis identifies the variation in the nature of student reflection. The linguistic analysis and the follow up interviews show how complex the interpretations and engagements are with the process of reflective practice and raise the critical issue to what extent reflective practice is 'effective'.

Sue Wharton's (University of Warwick) paper looked at the way students writing up reflection group work on an MA TESOL programme need to manage the complexities of self presentation in discourse as well as differentiating themselves from others within the group work when critically reflecting on the process. The corpus based approach looked at the semantics of the way in which students manage the responsibility for certain actions at the level of discourse – using first person clauses to identify those aspects of practice which had gone well whilst obscuring agency in those aspects of the process which had not gone so well through passivisation or nominalisations. This rhetorical management of face is an important aspect of the reflective writing that is used to both show the author in a good light and to

mitigate blame of themselves and others.

Mary Hartog (University of Middlesex) explored what it means to 'organize reflection' for senior managers dealing with change in local authorities. Her disciplinary base included theories of critical management in a Business setting, and in this context she explored data about reflective practice from three cohorts of senior managers at the beginning, middle and end of their learning programme. She looked at the goals of reflection, and whether these were organised for 'compliant subjectivity' or for radicalisation: and the resolution of conflict. She emphasised the primacy of context and the emergence of new 'ways of knowing' within the dialogue, pointing to Belensky's 'Women's Ways of Knowing' as an example of the changing parameters in reflective practice.

Malcolm McDonald's (University of Warwick) paper stimulated a number of thinking points around reflective writing in HE as a discursive practice. Drawing on a Foucaultian perspective, reflective practice in HE is seen as a technology of the self constituting students as 'good citizens within a discourse of introspection, responsibility and guilt'. The paper also drew on Bernstein's notions of pedagogic discourse (relating self to institution) and situates reflective writing as a regulatory discourse in which the instructional discourse is embedded leading to deep sense of auto-evaluation. The

paper went on to link reflective practice of reflection in HE with employability agenda and the need to generate workers who take on personal responsibility for a set of transferable competences or ethical qualities that can be transferred from one site of employment to another.

Molly Bellamy's (University of Middlesex) paper addressed the third question of the genealogy of the discourse of reflective practice focusing on two 'strands' or 'moments' that have enabled its emergence. One traces the literacy of self hood back to the enlightenment and notions of freedom, liberal democracy and the free market. A second to the mid 20th century where the 'personal became the political' and which saw the emergence of reflective practice as an alternative, feminized paradigm with 'Self as a site for knowledge construction'. Molly argued that the discourse of reflective practice is used in the University to produce a 'subjectivity of responsabilization' – a technology for self surveillance auditable through institutional frameworks. The discussion picked up how such analyses can be related to practice based perspectives – as both/and rather than as polemical either/or perspectives.

Bernard Moss (University of Staffordshire) set up a canvas labyrinth as a physical reflective space, throughout both days of the seminar and participants were invited to write reflective comments in a notebook. Bernard

spoke about the characteristics of labyrinth as opposed to maze; the labyrinth being a path that led the traveler towards a destination, whilst the maze was designed to generate dead ends and false starts. Drawing on this as a metaphor for learning and reflection we discussed the capacity of reflection to be assessed and measured; and the fact that reflective learning tends to focus on the written medium, rather than less articulated and kinaesthetic learning. The experience was much appreciated by participants and allowed us a reference point as to what reflection *can be* rather than what *it is* or *should be*.

Hilary Nesi (Coventry University) contrasted the 'essayist' tradition with reflective writing, mapping across Bernstein's concept of the 'vertical' and the 'horizontal'. She discussed the ways in which empathetic writing is developed in story genres, differentiating between recount, anecdote, exemplum and narrative. Focusing on the latter, she noted the way this sets up a structure a need to present and resolve problems, and the ways in which blame is shared or distanced. She explored the way writers achieve empathy when narrating personal experiences, including the use of modality to express fear, judgement and appreciation. The issue that emerges is the expectation that reflective writing requires the 'messiness' of reflection itself to be resolved, rather than admitting to its inherent inconclusiveness.

Jane Spiro (Oxford Brookes University) explored the ways in which the notion of 'reflection' has been embedded in Quality benchmarks across subject disciplines in the UK HE sector. She looked at how these disciplinary benchmarks were actually perceived by subject tutors across disciplines, drawing on data from Entwistle in Edinburgh (2009) and her own data with academics in Oxford Brookes (2010). She found that both the focus of reflection, and its perceived outcomes, differed across disciplines, with a divide between the 'pure' and 'applied' subject disciplines; and that academics themselves were unaware of these differences and tended to offer learners a single paradigm of reflection not necessarily transferable from pure to applied contexts. In discussion, this brought us back to our earlier notion of the primacy of context in addressing our first question – the range of discourses and practices that come under the term 'reflection'.

Below, are some of the issues that were raised in the discussions over the two days:

- Reflection as challenging orthodoxy v reflection for conformity and compliance
- Reflection as transforming/transformational v reflection as mirroring status quo
- reflection as the process of pausing v reflection as leading to action

- Reflection as inward-facing (Narcissus) v reflection as outward-facing/ visible in the world (Icarus)
 - Reflection as individualised v reflection as collective, 'for the greatest good of the greatest number'
 - reflection as monologic v reflection as dialogic
 - reflection/'real' learning as unmeasurable/non-articulated v reflection as accountable, measurable, recorded
- The seminars from both days arrived at the following desired outcomes:
- A wiki for the sharing of presentations, assignment and activity examples, research projects and online dialogue, and to bring together the communities from both days
 - A shared published output- e.g. special issue of a journal



BAAL Annual General Meeting 2011

Friday, September 2nd 16.30 -18.00

As part of the 44th Annual Meeting,
University of the West of England, Bristol.

Language, Education and Disadvantage: a response to the deficit model of children's language competence

This seminar took place at Sheffield Hallam University on 19th and 20th April. It was coordinated by Peter Jones and Karen Grainger, Language and Literacy Research Group, Sheffield Hallam University. The aims of the event were to bring together scholars whose research challenges the 'deficit' view of working class language patterns that was prevalent in the 1960s and 1970s and which has re-emerged in both academic and non-academic quarters recently. Specific objectives were to:

- share knowledge and research findings in relevant areas of expertise, viz.
 - sociological analyses of the links between social disadvantage and educational attainment,
 - sociolinguistic studies of working-class children's language practices,
 - sociolinguistic studies of classroom and school interaction,
 - educational perspectives on the teaching of literacy,
 - critiques of language research which purports to offer linguistic evidence for the 'deficit' view of working-class families' communicative competence

- to understand the history and intellectual underpinnings of arguments for a link between 'language deficit' and educational underachievement
- promote in-depth discussion of the above topics
- to promote alternative accounts of the relationship between social class and educational attainment
- discuss ways in which the 'deficit model' of working class language may be counteracted
- create opportunities for future collaboration between individual researchers, research teams and institutions

The event took place over a day and a half and included 4 keynote speakers, as well as presentations from the 2 seminar coordinators. The rest of the time was devoted to discussion. We aimed to have a maximum of 25 participants and a total of 21 registered. A number of others expressed an interest but could not make the particular dates (possibly too close to Easter?) and a further 2 registered and subsequently dropped out. Nevertheless, we were very happy with the level of participation: it was a small and friendly group, which made for some very stimulating discussions. There was a valuable mix of expertise and disciplinary background, including linguists, educationists, speech and language therapists, sociologists and one head teacher. These included both experienced aca-

demics (several professors) as well as early career academics. Some of these came from the local area (both Sheffield University and Sheffield Hallam University) and others were from further afield: London (King's College and Institute of Education), Sussex, York, Leeds, Newcastle, Lancaster and Dublin.

Day one

1. The afternoon started off with a presentation from **Karen Grainger** (Sheffield Hallam University,) entitled "*The daily grunt": middle class bias and vested interests in the 'Getting in Early' and 'Why Can't They Read?' reports.* This explained the motivation for organising the seminar, which came mainly as a reaction to two publicly-funded reports that were published in 2008 and 2010 and whose findings were covered in the press. These reports, published by highly regarded think-tanks, betray a worrying lack of knowledge of sociolinguistic research and communication theory, twinned with a notable middle-class bias, when they address the topic of children's linguistic competencies, in terms of both spoken language and literacy. In their treatment of the linguistic interactions within working class and poorer families they represent a resurgence of a prejudiced and socially intolerant 'deficit' approach to children's language and communication which is consistent with, and often draws on (directly or indirectly), the work of Basil Bernstein.

2. Next, **John Hardcastle** (Institute of Education, London) spoke on *The Origins of the Deficit View*, which he related to the project 'Social Change in English 1945-65'. He posed the question, 'Why do the same arguments about deficit persist today?' and discussed the various trends in philosophical thought that have contributed to the view, e.g. the connection that the English philosopher John Locke made between poor thinking and poor speaking.

The deficit issue is to do with attributing a "lack of worth" to the practices of certain groups in society. One difference between present day educational practice and post-war teaching is that teaching has been de-politicised. Whereas teachers used to go into the profession with the aim of 'making a difference' to the lives and opportunities of children from working class backgrounds, nowadays they are so pre-occupied with meeting targets that there is no time or space left for creativity or independent thought in curriculum design.

3. **Louise Gazeley** (University of Sussex) gave a presentation entitled *Perspectives on Working Class Underachievement* in which she gave a critical account of recent policy discourses of educational attainment and disadvantage. The link between socioeconomic position and conventional educational under-achievement is clear and evident. But the relationship has to do with a history of educational failure

in the past - blaming the (lack of) language skills of parents is futile. Instead we need to find ways of breaking the cycle and of improving the educational prospects and motivation of working class children now in school. It was also noted, another parallel with worrying developments in the US, that 'genetic' causes of educational failure are being discussed in official reports.

4. The final formal session of the day was the 'Open forum' which was chaired by **Jodie Clark** (Sheffield Hallam University). She posed 2 questions to all three speakers of the day: (1) what are the key priorities for either research or policy in language and education? and (2) what is the benefit of the deficit model?

The discussion that followed from these questions talked about challenging the assumption that poor language equals poor intellect, bringing the 'social class' dimension back into discussions about under-achievement, and the need to develop a broader and richer picture of both language and society, that reflects the complexities of modern society. There was broad agreement that the deficit model serves a purpose - it legitimates inequalities, and this explains why it persists.

In the evening 11 of the participants enjoyed a meal at a local restaurant.

Day two

1. **Peter Jones** (Sheffield Hallam University) spoke on *Linguistics in the service of the 'deficit model': Halliday, Hasan and Bernstein*. He critiqued the work of Hasan which attempts to build on Bernstein's work on elaborated and restricted code with an apparently systematic way of coding interactions between mothers and children according to 'semantic variables'. These variables include notions of 'appropriacy' and 'informative' and 'formative' meaning. They are then said to reflect different 'forms of consciousness' which coincide with the occupational status (higher' and 'lower' autonomy professions of the breadwinner). Lower autonomy (which tend to be working class) families' styles of communication are judged to be generally less appropriate for the explicit transmission of information and thus deficient in an educational setting. Jones argued that Hasan's work starts from a deficit premise and can be shown to be completely untenable both linguistically and socially. One of the most fundamental, and erroneous, assumptions underpinning Hasan's work is that conceptual learning is a process taking place via the transmission of explicit verbal tokens.

2. The third keynote speaker, **Julia Snell** (King's College, London) gave a talk on *Dialect, Interaction and Class Positioning at School'* in which she reported on her ethnographic research in classrooms in 2 schools in Teeside.

She provided empirical evidence of how children who could be considered 'socially disadvantaged' have access to a rich repertoire of spoken language strategies, including invoking the regional vernacular, as a way of managing their relationships in school. Snell proposed that non-standard varieties of English that are spoken by children should be viewed as part of a rich repertoire which is a resource for making meaning, rather than simply being an alternative that is 'different' to standard English.

3. The final keynote speaker was **Guy Merchant** (Sheffield Hallam University) who gave a presentation entitled *The Trashmaster: Popular Culture, Bad Language and Writing Online* in which, he presented evidence that, far from having 'no language' (as claimed by some teachers), children who have difficulty with print literacy are often competent in digital literacies that are associated with popular culture. He argued that linguistic deficit and disadvantage resides not in the children but in the school system. The education system, then, is out-moded and needs to catch up with the 'new communication' culture.

4. **Ben Rampton** (King's College, London) chaired the open forum and posed the following questions to the 3 speakers of the day: (1) what do people see as the links between the different perspectives presented during the seminar? 2) what has changed since the 'last time round' (i.e. 1960s and

70s)? and (3) what's the balance between intervention and analysis that we should aim for?

In the discussion it was pointed out that there are continuities of discourse, in terms of disadvantage and deficit, which don't seem to go away with time, and yet many things in society have changed (increased consumerism, globalisation, the 'feminisation' of work). We need to think about how we tackle the same issues but in the current context and develop sophisticated models of social stratification and of language use.

It was pointed out that Labov and Trudgill's 'difference' approach is no longer sufficient in today's society and sociolinguists need to take account of the developments in society and communication (e.g. new literacies; multi-cultural communities). We need to be "intellectually ambitious" for all children and promote the idea of new literacies and non-standard forms as part of a repertoire *in addition to* other forms of language.

5. The final session of the seminar was a general discussion, chaired by **Peter Jones**, on *The way forward: how can we work together to challenge the deficit model and influence educational policy?* The group made several suggestions:

- (a) work for a special issue of an appropriate journal to include the papers given at the seminar,

- (b) organize a network of interested scholars and professionals for the purposes of sharing information and research in progress, keeping in touch about relevant developments and contributing to future projects related to the theme,
- (c) work towards joint conference papers for those amongst the group with similar or complementary research interests,
- (d) think about organizing a larger event on the topic at a future date.

participants also gave informal spoken feedback. All the feedback was very positive - participants had enjoyed the seminar and found it useful. It was suggested that it could have been improved by including the opportunity for small group discussion, so as to give everyone a chance to have their say.

Evaluation and feedback

We solicited feedback in the form of a written questionnaire; some partici-



Back issues of *BAALnews*, going as far back as the mid-1970s, can now be found in the 'Members' area of the website:

<http://www.baal.org.uk>

BAAL / Cambridge University Press SEMINAR PROGRAMME 2012: Call for seminar proposals

As part of its commitment to research in Applied Linguistics, BAAL is pleased to announce that financial support from Cambridge University Press and BAAL will be available for up to three seminars in 2012. Cambridge University Press with its interest in promoting [Applied Linguistic research](#) has generously sponsored the annual BAAL / Cambridge University Press Seminar Programme for many years. BAAL now invites proposals for the 2012 seminars, in all areas of applied linguistics, to be submitted to Caroline Tagg (Seminar Organiser) by 10th October 2011 (email address below).

These notes are intended as guidelines for the submission of proposals by seminar co-ordinators. They outline the sort of meeting that BAAL is particularly keen to encourage and the support that BAAL can offer.

Financial template

Applicants will need to follow (with modification if necessary) the financial template available on the BAAL website at http://www.baal.org.uk/seminars/seminars_finance.pdf.

Structure

BAAL is interested in promoting in-depth discussion of research topics in a format which is different from the opportunities provided at the Annual Meeting and in other seminar programmes.

Members preparing proposals for BAAL / Cambridge University Press seminars should bear in mind the following:

1. Proposals should investigate emergent, timely or relevant methods or topics.
2. Seminar meetings should be small enough that all the participants can interact with each other. We recommend meetings of ideally 15 – 25 people.
3. They should be held in a place accessible to the majority of members (i.e. they should normally take place in the UK).
4. At least two of these places should normally be reserved for student members of BAAL.
5. Seminar meetings should include an opportunity for people to meet informally. For this reason, two- or even three-day meetings are preferable to one-day, non-residential meetings.
6. Interdisciplinarity is valued - as evidenced, for example, in meetings organized across special interest groups or which are jointly organised with another learned society.
7. Seminar organisers might want to restrict invitations to participate in the seminar to invitees with special expertise. However, if this is the case, then care should be taken that the seminar does not become accessible only to those with detailed specialist knowledge. Organisers should specify whether

they plan attendance to be by invitation only and if so should provide reasons for this choice.

8. The co-ordinators should liaise with the BAAL Seminars Organiser to ensure that a representative from the BAAL Executive Committee can attend in some capacity for at least part of the event to present on the work of BAAL. The costs should be considered in budgeting for the event.
9. Innovative formats are welcome.
10. The time allocated to papers / presentations should be long enough for useful discussion to take place afterwards. This probably means not all participants will be able to present papers, and organisers will need to select.
11. The seminar may have concrete academic outcomes – e.g., formation of a group, publication of a monograph. Please specify if you think this will be the case.

Please note - an institutional department is not normally able to apply for funding until two years have elapsed since its last award.

Financial support

Financial support for 3 seminars which are successful in the competition takes the following forms:

- a) a repayable float of £500
- b) a non-repayable grant of £750

In addition, 2 runners up in the competition for the main funding may be

awarded BAAL support:

- a repayable float of £500 (These additional awards will be made at the discretion of the BAAL Executive Committee.)

These grants are intended to be used towards the costs of bookings, insurance, invited speakers, support for postgraduate students and so on. The grants will automatically be made on request to the BAAL Treasurer (Jim Milton at j.l.milton@swansea.ac.uk) by any seminar co-ordinator whose proposal is adopted for the BAAL / Cambridge University Press seminar programme.

Organisation

Once accepted for BAAL / Cambridge University Press sponsorship, seminar co-ordinators will receive guidelines on the organisation of seminars. At this point, the following should be noted:

- BAAL will advertise any seminars adopted for the programme in its own national publicity. Any local publicity should state that the seminar is supported by BAAL and Cambridge University Press.
- BAAL does not expect to make a financial profit out of the seminars, and will not cover any loss made by a seminar. Proper accounts explaining how BAAL grants have been spent will need to be provided to BAAL treasurer Jim Milton.
- Report on the seminar will be required for publication in Language

Teaching and in the BAAL newsletter within 4 weeks of the seminar having taken place.

Seminar Proposals

The seminar programme is the subject of an open competition. BAAL members are invited to submit proposals for seminars for the 2012 programme by **10th October 2011**. All bids will be scrutinised by the Executive Committee. The results will be announced by January 2012.

Please submit proposals by email. They should not exceed 2000 words in total and should include the following information:

- Seminar Title
- Date
- Place
- Name / Institution of Seminar Co-ordinator(s) (**only proposals submitted by BAAL members can be considered**)
- Full contact details (email and postal addresses and telephone number)
- Objectives of the seminar
- Rationale
- Organisation
 - numbers – organisers are encouraged to be realistic about likely numbers and particularly to avoid over-estimating likely interest
 - participants – e.g., by invitation or application, keynote speakers, etc.
- length of event / sessions, number of papers, discussion groups, workshops
- projected costs to participants (if any)
- Co-operation with other learned societies or interest groups
- Proposed use of sponsorship money, including projected costs where possible

Proposals or enquiries to:

Caroline Tagg

c.tagg@open.ac.uk

Halliday, M.A.K. & Greaves, W.S. (2008) *Intonation in the Grammar of English*. London: Equinox. ISBN 978-1-904768-15-9. 224 pages. £14.99/\$24.95.

Intonation in the Grammar of English is a very modern book, in the sense that it is, like Gries (2009) not just text but encourages the reader to be interactive. As the subject is intonation, this is nothing but appropriate. The reader will not just find patterns described, but can also see the spectrograms and, even more importantly, hear the relevant sound files (and watch videos for some closely analysed cases). This enables comparison of the reader's with the author's respective interpretations. Having the utterances on disc is an idea I first came across in Ladefoged (2000). Should the reader prefer this, she or he can read the book on their computer with the PDF document linked to audio- and video files. I myself preferred the paper version and downloaded the files on my phone to have them within easy reach wherever.

Another parallel to Gries' book is the sheer density. The impression is born out by two factors. Despite its short 224 pages, this is a long text. *Intonation's* publisher opted for a small font - clearly expecting all readers to have extremely good eyesight. Halliday & Greaves, moreover, provide a wealth of information, starting with an introduction about the basics of auditory perception, an interpretation of the different tones used in the English lan-

guage and a host of examples to demonstrate these insights, finally leading to descriptions in how far intonation patterns mirror grammatical units.

The introductory chapter, *representation of sound*, is very good as it goes into all the necessary technical details. This is followed by its interpretation, where Halliday still shows the influence of his mentor, J.R. Firth. As well as the general prosody discussion, we are given numerous examples like the following:

A choice in tone can realize both interpersonal and logical meanings. (...) [one example being] the grammatical relationship of subordination is signalled through the choice of a tone 4^ tone 1 sequence as in the utterance // 4 if you buy the tickets // 1 I'll pay for the dinner//. (p.47).

The authors then provide a theoretical background:

At the lexicogrammatical level (...) the tone unit corresponds to (i.e. realizes) a unit of information. This information unit is not identical with any of the units of the grammatical rank scale. (p.55) and, additionally, language does not "contain" meaning. Language consists of meaning; there is no meaning until it is brought into being in the form of language. (p.65).

This particular discussion is taken up at the start of Part 2, where Halliday & Greaves state that:

... in continuous dialogue, typically 60% of the information units are mapped into one complete clause. (...) .. the information unit is a grammatical unit that runs parallel with the units of grammatical ranks scale but not identical to any of them. One could talk of it as a unit of 'informational grammar" as opposed to 'clause grammar". (p.101)

Part 2 is clearly weaker than Part 1. It starts with a concise version of Halliday (1985). Some sections appear difficult to comprehend, almost certainly so without recourse to the sound-file, for example *Sound 5.3.4* (page 135). The book also lacks an explanation why the *detailed demonstration* (Chapter 6) is first based on an unusual radio interview, then focuses mainly on alternative (made-up) ways of intoning the same and similar sentences. This seems to be an unexpected deviation and it is not clear what purpose it serves. If this chapter really needs to be included, it may be better placed in the appendix (see below). While efforts were made to use natural occurring language, some utterances have been recorded by a male voice. This is confusing, however, if a (naturally occurring) female speaker is followed by a female reading the text with a different intonation pattern and then this is repeated - yet this time the

speaker is a male voice. (*Sounds 7.6 - 7.6.b*).

In chapter 7, the authors discuss secondary tones - though the coding of these can be as confusing as the tones itself. The examples certainly need a quiet space and patience to be listened to. Even though, I sometimes found myself sometimes disagreeing with the given interpretation - so I was glad to read that (for *Sound 7.4g*) "*the two authors came up with different interpretations*" (p.171) as well!

The appendices at the end of Parts one and two are a brilliant example of what an appendix can be like, as the material discussed in the main body of the chapters comes to life in a close discussion of real-life examples. Part three, however, does not consist of a written discussion: instead we find an *Analysis Guide* that uses the textbook format. Part 3, therefore, enables the reader to apply what has been discussed in Parts 1 and 2 with their own material. What I am missing, however, is the index. I would also have found it useful to have a brief glossary, maybe printed on a bookmark, to hand.

This book is for a reader who wants to know in detail about intonation features of English and how this interacts with the grammatical structure of the language. It may be rather hard-going for a typical undergraduate whose studies do not concentrate on phonetics, but will be useful for postgradu-

ates working in this area. The ideal reader also should not know much about *Functional Grammar*. Halliday appears like a Japanese gardener. The same garden will be tended, time and again and every time it is a little bit more perfect. Yet this is my strongest criticism of the book - for those acquainted with *Functional Grammar*, it becomes hard to find those parts of the book that are genuinely new and exciting. While there are a good number of relevant insights, I would still recommend Brazil (1997) instead of this book for those who want to research the features of intonation in the grammar of English.

References:

Brazil, D. (1997) *The communicative value of intonation in English*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Gries, S.T. (2009) *Quantitative Corpus Linguistics with R*. London: Routledge.

Halliday, M.A.K. (1985) *An Introduction to Functional Grammar*. Sevenoaks: Edward Arnold.

Ladefoged, P. (2000) *Vowels and consonants: an introduction to the sounds of languages*. Oxford: Blackwell.

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University of Liverpool

Fitzpatrick, Tess & Barfield, Andy (eds.). *Lexical Processing in Second Language Learners*. Bristol, UK: Multilingual Matters, 2009. pp. 177. ISBN 978-1-84769-151-4 (pbk).

In many ways, the story of this text is told in its subtitle: *Papers and perspectives in honour of Paul Meara*. Indeed, both coeditors (and most of this volume's contributors) are graduates of the Ph.D. program in Applied Linguistics that Meara established at Swansea University twenty years ago. Meara's influence on Swansea's vocabulary acquisition research group is clear throughout and this collection of papers highlights many aspects of Meara's remarkable legacy in the field. Covered here are a wide variety of research topics and approaches. There are chapters concerning the testing of vocabulary via yes/no measures, word association research, lexical richness in the classroom, and the effects of dictionary use on lexical acquisition. Vocabulary is examined sometimes as decontextualized lexis, elsewhere as components of formulaic language and collocations. Some researchers have brought a strictly experimental/statistical approach to their work, while others have stepped back from quantitative lexical data to take a more holistic, case study approach or to reflect and theorize on previous findings.

This collection begins with a preface by Alison Wray, offering a brief outline of the Swansea Applied Linguistics program to which so many of the

contributors owe so much. The Swansea Ph.D. is in fact quite unique in that candidates are primarily part-time distance students, the majority of whom teach languages and linguistics abroad. The current cohort is stationed in such diverse places as Japan, Italy, Hungary, and Israel. Access to L2 learners where they learn makes the kind of research described herein possible.

In Chapter 1, John Read and Paul Nation list Meara's many contributions to the field of vocabulary acquisition research including the introduction of the yes/no format to language testing, his groundbreaking work in word association, measurement of productive vocabulary, and his continuing attempts to model vocabulary networks. They also remind us of his lesser-known accomplishments, including his roles as book reviewer and as vocabulary acquisition research bibliographer. The fruits of his labour can be seen to this day at the Vocabulary Acquisition Research Group Archive: <http://www.lognostics.co.uk/varga/>.

The following chapter from John Shillaw re-examines Meara's yes/no vocabulary test format. Shillaw places these tests in their historical context, summarizing their evolution and examining critical issues that have continued to be raised about them. The chapter ends with Shillaw's introduction of a context-based yes/no test in which lexis is presented in sentences rather than as isolated words.

The next two chapters deal with word association (WA). First, Clarissa Wilks challenges many of the assumptions underlying association research. Based on her astute observations of decidedly qualitative research involving small groups of respondents, she is able to reveal some of the pitfalls that impact upon WA research findings. Included among these are huge variability in response patterns within groups, the influence of learner attitude, and the fact that informants may initiate deliberate processes and strategies during WA trials, rather than offering spontaneous responses.

Coeditor Tess Fitzpatrick (Chapter 4) also re-examines WA in the third of a series of studies utilizing meaning-, position-, and form-based response categories (instead of the paradigmatic/syntagmatic/clang categorization found in the majority of WA studies). This innovative break from the traditional methodology avoids some of the pitfalls Meara first outlined in the early 1980s, yet are still seldom addressed in WA research to date. She finds evidence that an individual's L1 response profile is significantly more similar to his or her L2 response profile than to the profiles of L2 respondents as a whole. She also finds a small but significant correlation between L2 language proficiency and L1-L2 response profile similarity implying that as L2 proficiency increases, an individual's L2 response profile becomes more like the person's L1 profile.

A number of chapters examine learners, lexis, and the classroom. First, Marlise Horst (Chapter 5) re-examines classrooms as lexical environments. Updating a 1997 study coauthored by Meara, Horst uses contemporary corpus tools to re-examine teacher talk in terms of its learnability and lexical richness. Next, Hilary Nesi and Atipat Boonmoh (Chapter 6) look at the use of bilingual pocket electronic dictionaries finding that, despite certain inadequacies, speed and ease of use encourage learner persistence. In Chapter 7, Jim Ronald also examines dictionary use in a longitudinal case study of L2 reading in which he applies Meara's *V_States* program to measure changes in incremental word knowledge. Like Ronald's, Hew Bell's Chapter 9 also describes a longitudinal, single-subject case study. Here, formulaic language production is monitored over a 16-month period. Adopting a dynamic systems theory perspective, Bell finds that some formulaic items moved in and/or out of prominence and that intermediate language structures emerged while lexical and grammatical subsystems continued to interact.

Andy Barfield returns to the WA paradigm in Chapter 8, this time to explore productive L2 collocation knowledge. The coeditor utilizes a multi-association test to find distinctions between the collocation productions of low-intermediate and advanced L2 learners. He concludes that, not only are advanced learners' lexicons larger,

but that core items are more easily linkable. Barfield reminds us that Meara has already suggested that size and organization are key dimensions of the mental lexicon.

Brent Wolter's innovative Chapter 10 challenges the traditional notion that vocabulary acquisition occurs in a straightforward manner from encountering language in context to inferring meaning from that context. Instead, Wolter provides a cogent argument that words that occur repeatedly in a wide variety of contexts create in the learner a pragmatic need to discover their definitions. Words that appear in relatively few linguistic contexts, however, do not require definitional knowledge for most learners. For example, from the relatively few contexts in which we have encountered the word *frumpy*, we may ascertain a relatively clear idea of situations in which it might be used, things it might be used to describe, and the effects it has on its immediate lexical environment. This supports Wolter's argument that partial, non-definitional word knowledge may presuppose the acquisition of definitions.

Finally, Richard Pemberton (Chapter 11) allows us a peek into his research process. He takes us on a journey starting with a hunch he had concerning a possible link between the way English reading is taught in Hong Kong and his students' pronunciation. From there we see how his opinions

were shaped by relevant research over the course of more than seven years.

At the end of this collection, the coeditors provide a wrap-up of this volume as a whole. They remind us of the diversity of approaches within its covers: from partial replications to innovation and reformulation, focuses on both contextualized and decontextualized lexis, and research drawn from the language classroom and from the laboratory. Indeed, much ground is covered in this volume and this collection will serve as an interesting addition to the bookshelves of anyone with an interest in the lexical process. A great many acquisition researchers will certainly find something of relevance to their own work here.

Juxtaposing the breadth of this book's themes with the fact that most of these researchers began their careers under

the tutelage of Paul Meara at Swansea is intriguing to say the least. Besides its practical value, then, this collection also serves as a testament to the breadth of influence that Paul Meara has had on the field as a whole. This is not to say that his many contributions are placed on a pedestal here. Indeed, both Shillaw and Fitzpatrick call some of his previous findings into question. Instead, these studies represent yet another aspect of Meara's contribution not described by Read and Nation in their compendium of his body of work. As long as there are Swansea graduates continuing to approach lexical acquisition research with depth of interest and a critical eye, we will always see Meara's legacy in the field.

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Please submit your contributions to
BAALNews by the following dates:

Autumn 2011 issue: September 30th

Winter 2011/2012 issue:
January 31st

Guidelines for contributors

Please submit all material by email to:
sebastian.rasinger@anglia.ac.uk

Unless there is a very special reason,
please submit material in Times New
Roman, 12pt, left aligned (not justi-
fied).

Please don't use text boxes, or try to
format your contribution in any other
way, as this complicates the reformat-
ting.

Thank you.

Please complete a membership application form, which can be found on our website:

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The aims of the Association are to promote the study of language in use, to foster interdisciplinary collaboration, and to provide a common forum for those engaged in the theoretical study of language and for those whose interest is the practical application of such work. The Association has over 750 members, and awards an annual Book Prize.

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